

# **OPEN GOVERNMENT PLAN**

**VERSION 3.0** 

**JUNE 2014** 

Last Updated: June 2, 2014

#### June 2014

At the U.S. Department of Labor we work every day to help people get the skills they need to succeed in good jobs that pay a fair wage; to ensure that workplaces are safe and free from discrimination; and that people have the chance to retire with dignity. This work matters, and so does doing it well.

Transparency, collaboration, and participation are all crucial ingredients in ensuring that the rungs on the ladder of opportunity remain in reach for every American.

Opportunity means engaging with more people more often. Opportunity means making it easier for the public to learn about, understand, and access our invaluable resources. Opportunity means using our crucial resources to spur innovation at all levels of government and with all manner of stakeholders. Opportunity means using our own data to drive decision making, and encouraging others to go where we can't.

This document outlines a number of important steps that the department has already taken to utilize the principles of open government to live up to the promise of our mission as well as important next steps to continue our trajectory toward a more transparent, participatory, and collaboration-centric agency.

Since we launched our initial open government plan in April of 2010, we have seen significant progress in a number of important areas. Our Online Enforcement Database has been continually updated and improved, providing the public with unprecedented access to data from across the Department of Labor. We have collaborated with other federal agencies and outside stakeholders to produce user-friendly tools that put important information in the hands of the American people. We have created unprecedented transparency in our competitive grant process which in turn has driven greater participation and enabled further collaboration.

This plan reflects the input of leaders throughout the department, as well as crucial feedback from outside organizations including the Center for Effective Government, the Sunlight Foundation, OpenTheGovernment.org, and Creative Commons.

In the spirit of collaboration, we invite feedback on this plan and will continue to update this document to reflect those conversations. Please look for posts on the <u>DOL Blog</u> for an opportunity to provide this crucial feedback.

# Contents

| 1. <b>N</b> e | ew and Expanded Government-wide Transparency Initiatives                       | 4  |
|---------------|--|----|
| 1.1.          | Developing an Enterprise Data Inventory  | 4  |
| 1.2.          | Leveraging an Application Programming Interface to Drive Outside Innovation    | 4  |
| 1.3.          | Strengthening Whistleblower Protection:  | 5  |
| 1.4.          | Assessing and Improving Agency Websites:                                       | 6  |
| 2. <b>Su</b>  | access Stories in Promoting Public Knowledge and Fostering Innovation          | 6  |
| 2.1.          | Leveraging Third Party Developers with Challenge.gov                           | 7  |
| 2.2.          | Improving Transparency and Efficiency in the Labor Certification Process       | 7  |
| 2.3.          | Revamping the Pattern of Violations Program to Protect Miners                  | 8  |
| 3. O          | ngoing Government-Wide Transparency Initiatives                                | 8  |
| 4. <b>Fr</b>  | reedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests                                      | 12 |
| 4.1.          | Highlighted Online Resources   | 13 |
| 4.2.          | FOIA Training  | 13 |
| 4.3.          | FOIA Outreach  | 14 |
| 4.4.          | Discretionary Disclosures  | 15 |
| 4.5.          | FOIA System Improvements   | 15 |
| 4.6.          | Increasing Proactive Disclosures   | 16 |
| 4.7.          | Online tracking of FOIA requests   | 17 |
| 4.8.          | Improving Timeliness and Reducing Backlogs                                     | 17 |
| 5. Ac         | dditional Efforts to Improve Transparency                                      | 18 |
| 5.1.          | Existing Flagship Initiative: Online Enforcement Database                      | 18 |
| 5.2.          | Next Steps: Online Enforcement Database  | 19 |
| 5.3.          | Existing Flagship Initiative: Open Grantmaking Initiative                      | 19 |
| 5.4.          | Next Steps: Open Grantmaking Initiative  | 20 |
| 5.5.          | New Flagship Initiative: Upgrading developer.dol.gov and API:                  | 20 |
| 5.6.          | New Commitment: Adopting Civil Service Schema for dol.gov and online tools     | 21 |
| 6. <b>In</b>  | creasing Public Participation in the Mission of the Department                 | 21 |
| 6.1.          | The Federal Register   | 21 |
| 6.2.          | Online Events Calendar   | 21 |
| 6.3.          | The DOL Newsletter   | 22 |
| 6.4.          | Public Engagement Improves Job Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities | 22 |
| 6.7.          | Engaging the Public with Online Collaboration and Crowdsourcing Tools          | 23 |

| 7. | Im  | proving Collaboration to Advance the Mission of the Department of Labor  | 24 |
|----|-----|--|----|
| 7  | .1. | Building Communities of Practice to Support the Federal Workforce System | 24 |
| 7  | .2. | New Commitment: Building an Internal API for cross-agency data sharing   | 24 |
| 8. | Ch  | art of Proposed Deliverables   | 25 |
| 9. | Re  | ferenced Online Resources  | 25 |

#### 1. New and Expanded Government-wide Transparency Initiatives

In December 2013, the Obama Administration released the second "Open Government National Action Plan for the United States of America," which included new and expanded open-government commitments. The Department of Labor is actively working to support the new and expanded commitments outlined in this plan.

# 1.1. Developing an Enterprise Data Inventory

In compliance with the May 9, 2013 Open Data Memorandum (OMB Memorandum M-13-13) and the related Project Open Data the department is actively working to create, update, and maintain an enterprise data inventory by November 30, 2014. To ensure this milestone is met the department is implementing a quarterly/modular approach for updating and completing the inventory schedule. The Office of the Chief Information Officer is working collaboratively with all DOL agencies to ensure the creation of agency level data asset inventories that will be submitted and compiled by the OCIO into an enterprise-wide data asset inventory in time to meet the November 2014 deadline.

Additional information about the department's open data inventory approach is available online at http://www.dol.gov/digital-strategy/inventoryschedule.htm

# 1.2. Leveraging an Application Programming Interface to Drive Outside Innovation

An Application Programming Interface (API) is a software application that software developers use or create to aid or support the sharing of information (i.e., data) between applications (apps) including for example smartphone apps, mobile apps, website apps, and/or web-based information systems applications. In other words, APIs are used as a doorway to access information and/or interconnect separate information systems or applications. Thus, APIs have become essential and effective tools for software developers to use to release and capture data and combine data from various sources to create new apps.

APIs are used to support all types of apps including smartphone apps, web apps, and even stand-alone legacy business mission systems. APIs have evolved over time from single function proprietary software code to sophisticated, standardized, open source and freeware that support a wide variety of features and/or capabilities. APIs are now the fundamental building block for sharing data and information via mobile apps, website apps, websites, and/or web-based information systems applications.

In 2011, established a public-facing Developer Community website, at <a href="http://developer.dol.gov/">http://developer.dol.gov/</a>, to assist, support, and encourage public entities to develop user friendly software applications using DOL datasets. Since that time DOL has published more than 175 data tables grouped into 32 datasets of DOL agency information, to its public developer website. As part of its vision to implement this vast amount of publicly-

available data efficiently and effectively, DOL took an innovative approach and implemented a centralized API based portal to its developer web page. This centralized API portal acts a smart centralized communications/access point for all of DOLs public data. Thus, instead of having a unique API for each of the 175 data tables, DOL established a more scalable single API portal that allows user access to all accessible DOL information. Some of this data, such as the data tables from the Bureau of Labor Statistics contains live up to the minute real-time data from their production systems.

An example of two DOL data tables that are publically available include 10 years of labor and/or economic indicator data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and Unemployment Insurance initial claims related data from the Office of Unemployment Insurance (OUI).

```
BLS datasets — <a href="http://developer.dol.gov/BLS_Numbers-DATASET.htm">http://developer.dol.gov/BLS_Numbers-DATASET.htm</a>
OUI datasets — <a href="http://developer.dol.gov/OUI_Claims-DATASET.htm">http://developer.dol.gov/OUI_Claims-DATASET.htm</a>
```

DOL's centralized public-facing API portal was built using a unique approach. Rather than standing up a separate API for each dataset, DOL envisioned publishing ALL of its publicly-available data through a single API. While other federal agencies are publishing individual datasets as distinct APIs, DOL recognized early that this approach did not scale efficiently or effectively for an organization that has large volume of data such as DOL. Thus, DOL decided to pursue a more scalable approach — by having a large number of data tables contained within a smaller number of datasets, which are all served via a single API.

The single API portal acts as a smart communications hub to control and manage application data requests from one or more interconnected datasets, which improves the efficiency and effectiveness of data queries as well as the overall potential of supporting more advanced applications. The centralized API portal utilizes open standards served by an Open Data Protocol (OData) implementation. OData allows data access from a web service-consuming applications and supports many data source technologies. OData is based on the REST web-based software architecture design principles, which is the industry standard for open and scalable APIs served over the Web. OData serves data in JSON and XML formats.

# 1.3. Strengthening Whistleblower Protection:

The department was initially certified as a participant in Office of Special Counsel's Whistleblower Protection Act certification program in November 2010. That certification was allowed to lapse in 2013. The department is actively engaged in the recertification process. The department posts the required notices throughout DOL facilities and communicates regularly with staff about whistleblowing, whistleblower retaliation, and prohibited personnel practices. Additional information about whistleblower protections for DOL employees is available through the Whistle Blower Protection Ombudsman online at <a href="http://www.oig.dol.gov/whistleblower-">http://www.oig.dol.gov/whistleblower-</a>

#### ombudsman.htm.

#### 1.4. Assessing and Improving Agency Websites:

In 2011, the Department of Labor participated in the First Fridays Product Testing Program sponsored by the General Services Administration. This usability testing session monitors three participants as the complete common DOL.gov website tasks. The experience was eye-opening, and led us to rethink the layout and focus of DOL.gov. As a result we:

Revised the DOL.gov home page to enhance usability and readability.

Based on the feedback we received from this free testing, we darkened the home page font, lightened the background color, adjusted the header to remove a confusing text box and, most importantly, we prioritized the placement of the sections of the home page to match what users need the most.

#### Changed our search engine.

Providing great search results across the vast amount of content available through our websites is a challenge. With so many documents available in our search index, a simple search for a term like "training" would return all of the correct documents, but without regard to the popularity or relevancy of the different results. Furthermore, it required a great deal of processing power to create and maintain accurate search indexes, resulting in it taking some time for the newest content to be included in search results. The DOL.gov search engine is now powered by GSA's <u>DigitalGov Search</u>. The "out of the box" search results are much more relevant than our prior search results because it harnesses the power of a world-class search engine and the program offers us a great amount of control for suggesting the best links for certain search results and ensuring that new content or breaking news is included in the search results.

#### Are asking for public feedback.

Beginning in March 2012, the department added a feature at the top of pages on DOL.gov that asks "Was this page helpful?". This feature allows us to gauge reaction to the specific content users see on the site. By answering simple question, users can provide important feedback on if they particularly like a page or couldn't find what they needed easily. We are tracking what pages receive negative feedback and targeting those pages for updates. We can also track the ratings of a page over time, so we'll know if our changes are improving public satisfaction with the content.

The dol.gov homepage was subsequently redesigned in 2014 to further enhance usability and readability by limiting the amount of text on the main homepage and prioritizing the most timely and requested information. A user-oriented header focuses on providing direct links to the most popular topics, while also keeping tabs on the most frequently ask questions. Direct links to heavily requested weekly and monthly economic data are also provided.

# 2. Success Stories in Promoting Public Knowledge and Fostering Innovation

The department has conducted a number of projects to increase the awareness and use of important agency data including posting relevant data for distribution via Data.gov, leveraging an API to drive third-party innovation, building a dedicated community with resources for developers, and actively using challenges and prizes to make data more easily available to the public online.

# 2.1. Leveraging Third Party Developers with Challenge.gov

The department was an early adopter of the challenge gov platform and has since used prizes and challenges to both increase awareness of available departmental data and present this data in innovative, user-friendly ways.

Most recently, as part of the 75th anniversary of the Fair Labor Standards Act in 2013, the U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division issued the "DOL Fair Labor Data Challenge" to enlist the help of third-party developers in creating smartphone applications that integrate the department's publicly available enforcement data with consumer ratings websites, geo-positioning Web tools and other relevant data sets, such as those available from state health boards. These apps allow consumers or jobseekers to see if an establishment that they want to do business with has been in compliance with federal labor laws.

The "Disability Employment App Challenge" in 2012 encouraged third-party developers to build tools using available DOL, Social Security Administration, and Department of Education data to help improve employment opportunities and outcomes for people with disabilities. Among the winners were apps that used responsive design to deliver an accessible job search experience across all platforms and a scalable Dynamic Content Management System that ensures accessibility for screen reader and keyboard only users.

The 2012 "Worker Safety and Health App Challenge" called on developers to use publicly available DOL and NIOSH data along with other online resources to educate young workers about workplace safety and health risks as well as their rights in the workplace. Submissions were designed for Internet browsers, smartphones, feature phones and social media platforms, or as native Windows or Macintosh applications.

In partnership with the White House Equal Pay Task Force, the department held the "Equal Pay App Challenge" in 2012 and encouraged outside developers to use publicly available labor data and other online resources to educate users about the pay gap and to build tools to promote equal pay. The winning submissions allow users to find tips on important salary topics from typical pay ranges, skill level requirements for certain jobs, and how to negotiate salaries most effectively.

# 2.2. Improving Transparency and Efficiency in the Labor Certification Process

Inundated with Freedom of Information Act requests for information on labor certification applications, the Office of Foreign Labor Certification began to realize that

responding to requests was having a negative impact on their overall administration of these programs. Although the requested data was already contained within the office's case processing systems, it was not available to the public. OFLC then created the iCERT Labor Certification Registry, a web-based single point of access for the public to search for and retrieve copies of labor certification documents. Since it was launched, OFLC has seen a nearly 60 percent reduction in FOIA requests. In addition, in response to rising numbers of H-2A and H-2B labor certification applications, OFLC developed and implemented new electronic case filing systems to improve the user experience for customers who file applications.

These improvements led to an average three-day improvement on processing times in Fiscal Year 2013. As an added benefit, the new technology allows staff to process certification applications remotely through a formal telework program, which led to higher productivity and increased continuity of operations during severe weather events.

# 2.3. Revamping the Pattern of Violations Program to Protect Miners

In order to effectively enforce the law at mines with the worst health and safety records, MSHA staff updated its pattern of violations program with simplified screening criteria and a new tool that allows mine operators to monitor their own compliance. The new screening process is more data-driven, more transparent, and puts mine operators in the driver's seat to implementing an effective corrective action program before they make it to POV status. An online tool was developed to help mine operators compare their compliance records against MSHA's screening criteria for POV, as well as allowing them to proactively meet benchmarks for improvement. An analysis of the 26 mines completing the POV process showed continuing overall improvements in safety and health. As of Dec. 2013, those mines: lowered their violation rates by 37 percent; lowered the rate of significant and substantial violations by 59 percent; lowered unwarrantable failure violations by 78 percent, and lowered the lost-time injury rate by 44 percent.

# 3. Ongoing Government-Wide Transparency Initiatives

The department is actively engaged in all required existing transparency initiatives. Selected details are included below.

#### Data.gov

Since the outset, the Office of the Chief Information Officer has been working closely with agencies throughout the department to publish datasets on Data.gov. The Bureau of Labor Statistics contributed 34 initial data sets for the launch of data.gov and in 2012 53 raw datasets and 13 data extraction tools were available. The department currently makes 315 datasets available through data.gov.

# *eRulemaking*

DOL was one of the initial partners in the eRulemaking initiative and all of our regulatory steps seeking public input (e.g., Requests for Information, Advance Notices

of Proposed Rulemakings, Notices of Proposed Rulemakings) are posted on Regulations.gov for comment. This allows the public to search and view any federal agency's rulemaking dockets. Previously, a person would have to visit each agency to inspect or make copies of docket materials (i.e., the rule, supporting studies/documents, all public comments received on the rule) — now this can be done though one portal. This also allows for cross-agency searches to see what any federal agency is doing with respect to a particular topic.

A number of DOL agencies have also effectively used <a href="www.regulations.gov">www.regulations.gov</a> for non-rulemaking Federal Register notices. The Department of Labor's Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB) regularly utilizes the site to solicit broad input from stakeholders around the world. Whether it is to gather information about goods from countries produced by child labor or forced labor under the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005 (TVPRA), information about efforts by countries to eliminate the worst forms of child labor, or its procedural guidelines for implementing its monitoring responsibilities, ILAB posts information gathering efforts on the regulations.gov portal.

ILAB has also utilized the <a href="www.regulations.gov">www.regulations.gov</a> tool gather information on best practices to eradicate child labor and forced labor as part of its overall research under its TVPRA responsibilities. This has provided an effective means to collect substantive comments in a manner that is fully open and accessible to the public. Those who wish to make comments can readily see the input of other stakeholders and provide relevant information. ILAB strives to conduct its international work in as transparent and open manner as possible, and publishing its notices requesting information or feedback on regulations.gov is an integral part of this process.

In addition to actively participating in <a href="www.regulations.gov">www.regulations.gov</a>, we also created a landing page within our own Web site to provide visitors with a one-stop source for comprehensive information about our current and proposed regulatory actions: <a href="www.dol.gov/regulations/">www.dol.gov/regulations/</a>. This site provides videos explaining the impact of proposed regulations as well as listing the current and upcoming opportunities to provide comments, and the transcripts from our extensive regulatory web chats.

Some DOL agencies, such as EBSA, post the public comments on the agency website in an effort to improve accessibility for the broader public. The comments are posted with links to the Federal Register documents (RFI's, proposed rules, interim final rules requesting comment) as well as testimony from public hearings, if held. Many of the regulations have had a lot of public interest with hundreds of comments submitted. The index of the comments posted allows visitors to see who commented and then read those comments they wish to read.

#### IT Dashboard

The <u>IT Dashboard</u> enables federal agencies and the general public to view details of federal information technology investments and track spending, performance, and progress of technology investments over time.

The performance of each of our major IT investments is rated on three factors: cost, schedule, and a CIO rating. Each month the DOL program office provides an update of the investment's actual costs, as well as actual accomplishments of the program's activities for that month. These two factors are compared against the planned activities for that month when the investment first began. The variance is then an indicator of how well the investment is achieving its performance goals at that point of its development. The third factor, the CIO assessment of the program, is primarily based on a risk assessment associated with the investment achieving its intended results.

#### Integrating Federal IT Dashboard with DOL IT

We have embraced this transparency program since its inception and have had a long standing quarterly control review process for all of our major IT investments. Since the announcement of the IT Dashboard, we have integrated the associated requirements of the IT Dashboard with our program reviews and other IT governance processes. The CIO ratings are applied each month, and the entire process is managed by the Office of the Chief Information Officer resulting in timely updates with data quality reviews that results in an accurate portrayal of DOL's IT investments.

#### Recovery.gov

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) created the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board, which maintains <u>Recovery.gov</u> so the American people can see how ARRA money is being distributed by federal agencies and how the funds are being used by the recipients. The Board's goals are to provide transparency in relation to the use of ARRA-related funds and prevent and detect fraud, waste, and mismanagement.

DOL fully complies with Office of Management and Budget guidance for ARRA implementation and reporting. On a weekly basis, DOL submits an ARRA Financial and Activity Report to Recovery.gov and posts the report to www.dol.gov/recovery/ to provide the public with a snapshot of its ARRA-related obligations and outlays. The report includes a breakdown of funding by Treasury Account Fund Symbol, Award Type, and State, as well as a narrative description of the past week's major ARRA-related developments.

DOL utilizes its <a href="www.dol.gov/recovery/">www.dol.gov/recovery/</a> Web site to provide important data and narratives regarding its ARRA-funded programs and efforts, including working training, unemployment benefits, and expanded access to continued health benefits.

# Grants.gov

The department actively uses Grants.gov to promote open funding opportunities and manage the application process for competitive grants. A list of <u>current funding</u> <u>opportunities is available here</u>.

#### USAspending.gov

Since 2007, DOL has complied with <u>USASpending.gov</u> reporting cycles as documented on the site's data transmission and compliance dashboard.

To send assistance data to USASpending.gov, the department uses its E-Grants system. Grant data captures the requisite information from Grant Awards, which is transferred into periodic data files for upload to USASpending.gov on a monthly cycle. DOL has instituted a data validation process to ensure the consistency and accuracy of its grants award data.

DOL has consistently complied with <u>USASpending.gov</u> reporting requirements to date; however, DOL is currently developing its Open Government Data Quality Framework and Data Quality Plan, which will formalize a strategy to enhance the quality of spending information.

#### Records Management

The department is committed to meeting its Records Management requirements and ensuring the timely transfer of all permanently valuable records to the National Archives. The Department's Records Management Program objectives are to:

- Provide effective control, appropriate security, and management over the creation, maintenance, use and disposition of all records within the Department regardless of recording media.
- Ensure that the records accurately reflect the business practices, polices, and transactions of the Department.
- Foster effective and economical Departmental record keeping.
- Ensure care, preservation and disposition of the Department's records.
- Coordinate records management activities with other information management and Departmental activities.
- Ensure all DOL employees are well-informed of their records management responsibilities.
- Prevent the unauthorized access, removal, and loss of Departmental records.

On February 13, 2013, the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management (ASAM) issued Guidelines for Compliance with NARA/OMB Managing Government Records Directive to Agency Heads. This plan provided a framework for DOL to outline its goals over the next few years. From this memorandum, work groups were formed in both the Business Operations Center (BOC) and Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) in order to manage the numerous deliverables. The ASAM also tasked OCIO with leading DOL offices and agencies in creating a Department-wide Strategic Records Management Plan (SRMP). The Department is developing this plan which will delineate a comprehensive strategy and a roadmap for aligning people, processes, and tools to streamline, modernize, and improve DOL's Records Management policies and practices over a seven year period from FY 2014 through FY 2020. Moreover, the SRMP will address the actions needed to comply with the requirements established for

all Federal agencies by the OMB and NARA Managing Government Records Directive (M-12-18) while also achieving maximum value for DOL stakeholders.

A detailed description of the Department's records management program is available at <a href="http://www.dol.gov/dol/records/">http://www.dol.gov/dol/records/</a>.

#### Congressional Requests

The Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs (OCIA) has primary responsibility for analyzing and responding to Congressional requests for information. The Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs oversees a staff of Legislative Liaisons responsible for each of the specific offices and agencies within the Department of Labor. Inquiries that specifically involve the Secretary of Labor are also routed through the Executive Secretariat within the Office of the Secretary (OSEC).

OCIA also notifies congressional offices regarding grants awarded by the Department and provides direction and coordination for all congressional and intergovernmental liaison and outreach activities for the Department of Labor.

OCIA assists the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, agency heads, and departmental staff to develop effective programs and strategies to promote the Department's goals and objectives on Capitol Hill as well as among state and local officials. In addition to congressional and intergovernmental affairs units, OCIA also includes the Department of Labor's Regional Representatives.

A record of the recent congressional testimony by the Department's senior leadership is available online at <a href="http://www.dol.gov/\_sec/media/congress/">http://www.dol.gov/\_sec/media/congress/</a>

#### **Declassification**

The Department of Labor has not had classification authority in over thirty (30) years. As a result, we do not have an active program for the declassification of documents, nor do we have staff assigned to this task. A small number of historic documents which were classified before 1978 are maintained by the National Archives and Records Administration, Federal Records Center Program under a joint Memorandum of Understanding.

# 4. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests.

The Department of Labor (DOL) has a decentralized Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) program in which each component agency responds directly to FOIA requests implicating its programs and activities. This allows for more accurate, complete, and timely responses to the public. While this report reflects FOIA activities at the Departmental level, it also distinguishes the volume and timeliness of each DOL component as it carries out its respective responsibilities under the FOIA.

Although FOIA processes at DOL are decentralized, departmental oversight is provided by the Office of Information Services (OIS), which operates under the supervision of the Solicitor of Labor, the Department's Chief FOIA Officer. OIS provides agency-wide leadership and guidance to ensure compliance with FOIA, particularly to increase the quality and timeliness of FOIA responses; reduce the backlog of pending FOIA requests; and review the effectiveness of each agency's FOIA processes in order to benchmark best practices, and make recommendations for programmatic improvements. Additional information about the Department's FOIA program is available online at <a href="http://www.dol.gov/dol/foia/">http://www.dol.gov/dol/foia/</a>.

The Department received a total of <u>18,755</u> initial requests for records during Fiscal Year 2013, a slight increase from 18,560 received in FY2012. The Department processed 19,175 initial FOIA requests in FY13, a slight decrease from the 19,224 processed in FY2012. At year's end, total requests in "backlog" status (meaning not processed within statutory time limits) had decreased from 740 at the end of FY2012 to 620 at the end of FY2013

# 4.1. Highlighted Online Resources

- FY2013 Annual FOIA Report
- 2014 Chief FOIA Officer Report
- DOL-Wide FOIA Reading Room
- How to submit a FOIA request
- Online FOIA Tracking System
- Quarterly FOIA Data available in XML files

# 4.2. **FOIA Training**

On August 20 - 22, 2013, the Office of the Solicitor, through the Office of Information Services, which serves as DOL's overall FOIA administrative manager, hosted the Department's Fifth Annual FOIA Training Conference. The three half-day event was themed, "Transformation 2.0: Transparency, Innovation and the Way Forward," and was designed to train Department of Labor access professionals on a variety of FOIA topics, both administrative and legal. Conference speakers included attorneys and FOIA professionals from across the Department and M. Patricia Smith, DOL's Chief FOIA Officer, provided the keynote address. The interactive training was presented via webcast and made available to approximately 400 DOL staff members nationwide. The training materials and videos of each presentation were published to our internal webpage for future viewing and self-paced learning opportunities.

#### Quarterly Departmental FOIA Coordinators Meetings

The Office of Information Services holds quarterly meetings with FOIA Coordinators who represent each of DOL's 23 FOIA agency components. These meetings provided an opportunity to disseminate information, advance the annual agenda established by the Chief FOIA Officer, offer on-the-spot training on the application of FOIA exemptions, provide guidance on the considerations involved in evaluating "foreseeable harm" in

regards to potential discretionary disclosures, discuss administrative processing matters, share best practices in customer service and related topics and focus on the importance of overall backlog reduction, with emphasis on closing the ten oldest requests each year.

#### FOIA Forums

OIS conducted a series of small, informal training sessions commonly referred to as "FOIA Forums" on topics such as Best Practices in Customer Service, Use of the Secretary's Information Management System for FOIA (SIMS-FOIA) and Alternative Dispute Resolution.

#### Monthly FOIA Teleconferences

OIS instituted monthly FOIA Teleconferences during the first quarter of FY 2014. The purpose for the monthly meetings is to update FOIA staff on "hot topics", issues of concern, offer guidance on FOIA matters as they arise, as well as offer an informal environment that allows Coordinators to speak with candor when addressing concerns or raising questions regarding everyday issues they encounter while processing FOIA requests. Participation in these meetings is mandatory for each agency component with a backlog of pending requests.

#### Other training

In addition to the multiple DOL-sponsored training opportunities discussed above, DOL FOIA professionals have taken advantage of outside FOIA training opportunities, including FOIA-related courses offered by DOJ's Office of Legal Education, briefings and webinars hosted by DOJ's Office of Information Policy, and FOIA and Privacy Act seminars offered by the Graduate School USA and the American Society of Access Professionals.

We estimate that 95% of the FOIA professionals within the Department participated in FOIA training between March 2012 and March 2013. The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual FOIA Training Conference will be held in June 2014.

#### 4.3. FOIA Outreach

The DOL FOIA Public Liaison remains in constant contact with requesters, including public advocacy and open government groups, concerning the Department's FOIA policy. Consistent with the statutory role of that position, the FOIA Public Liaison has been an able resource in help in to negotiate the scope of extremely broad requests, fostering an understanding of the types of records created and maintained by the Department, resolving administrative processing matters such as fees and fee waivers, reducing delays, and assisting in the resolution of disputes.

Further, senior staff attended the "open government" meeting called by the Deputy Associate White House Counsel where we discussed concerns raised by the "open government" requester community with regard to executive branch agencies carrying out the President's initiative on Open Government. OIS used information gained from that

meeting to establish an agenda, training materials and learning objectives for our FOIA Forum on Customer Service.

# 4.4. Discretionary Disclosures

In his 2009 FOIA Guidelines, the Attorney General strongly encouraged agencies to make discretionary releases of information even when the information might be technically exempt from disclosure under the FOIA. OIP encourages agencies to make such discretionary releases whenever there is no foreseeable harm from release.

The Office of the Solicitor issued Departmental guidance on making discretionary disclosures. This guidance builds on the general guidance issued by DOJ on when and how to make "discretionary disclosures" under FOIA, providing detailed information to assist in guiding decisions on discretionary disclosures based on knowledge of Departmental programs and the nature and character of the records DOL creates in carrying out its mission.

It reminded DOL's FOIA professionals that in response to specific FOIA requests, DOL agency components should not only disclose the information that the FOIA requires to be disclosed, but also make every effort to make discretionary disclosures of information where there is no foreseeable harm in doing so. This message had been underscored by the DOL Chief FOIA Officer in her keynote address at the DOL FOIA Conference as well as in formal and informal sessions conducted by the Office of Information Services and agency component specific forums.

To help ensure that an appropriate analysis of whether to make a discretionary disclosure is considered as a part of processing each FOIA request received, DOL also modified its FOIA tracking system to add a mandatory field that tracks, for each request, whether a disclosure was made as a matter of discretion. If the user indicates that a discretionary disclosure was made, the user must also identify which FOIA exemption could have been applied to withhold the information in question from disclosure. The large agency components report that they have established processing protocols to help their FOIA staffs make informed determinations regarding the assessment of a foreseeable harm in disclosure. Others report auditing reporting data to make sure that subordinate staffs are complying with the existing guidance on discretionary disclosures.

The Department of Labor posted all of the required quarterly FOIA reports for Fiscal Year 2013 to our public facing FOIA webpage. In addition to the DOJ requirement to post those reports in a machine readable format, DOL has chosen to publish them in a human readable format as well. The quarterly reports are available at <a href="http://www.dol.gov/dol/foia/">http://www.dol.gov/dol/foia/</a>.

#### 4.5. FOIA System Improvements

Consistent with Office of Personnel Management's Position Classification Flysheet for Government Information Series, GS-0306, issued in March 2012, DOL agency

components have converted all full time FOIA professionals to the new Government Information Specialist job series. Please note, however, that each DOL agency has unique programmatic priorities and that most staff are actively involved in many other areas besides FOIA. In those cases, conversion to the Government Information Specialist job series would not be feasible.

# **Processing Procedures**

Labor did not maintain an average of 10 less calendar days to adjudicate requests for expedited processing. As such, DOL will continue to monitor the progress of our agency components to encourage prompt responses to requests seeking expedited processing, issue additional guidance on this topic and offer training to help staff make determinations on when to grant or deny such requests.

#### Requester Services

When requester's concerns come to the attention of the DOL FOIA Public Liaison and the matter cannot be resolved within the Department, requesters are advised that they can seek assistance from the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS). DOL does not routinely notify requesters of OGIS's services in our letters affirming denials on appeals.

# Self-Assessments

During FY 2013 DOL conducted an audit of data in SIMS-FOIA to ensure complete processing of FOIA requests received by the Department as well as to obtain the most accurate data for FOIA reporting purposes. As part of this audit, we located a large number of records that had been improperly listed in the FOIA request system with a pending "Action Required" or "AR" code. When records are in an "AR" status, SIMS-FOIA does not track them for timeliness or any other processing milestone. An early review of our progress to reconcile the data indicated that the FY2012 efforts were successful. However, as we began preparing data for the FY2013 report, we located an additional number of requests that remained in "AR" status at the close of FY2012; meaning requests were received by DOL in FY2012, but were not converted for processing and tracking purposes until after the close of the fiscal year. Those additional requests have been reconciled. We now believe that the Department has accounted for all outstanding requests as part of this ongoing audit of the system.

#### 4.6. Increasing Proactive Disclosures

Many agency components report targeted efforts within their agencies to monitor FOIA requests to determine when responsive records may generate interest in the public at large. This effort has helped agency components make determinations on when to affirmatively publish information and data to their public facing websites.

With more frequency and in greater volume, components posted FOIA logs, annual reports, policy guidance, historical reports, mission reports, government purchase card holder lists, strategic plans, contracts information, contract listings, lists of accessioned documents, press releases, testimonies and speeches, workplace accident reports,

investigations, audit reports, proposals and abstracts for grant applications, reports to Congress, Congressional hearings, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) complaint data, veterans information and links on worker healthy living.

As indicated, each DOL agency component is responsible for posting and updating its own web content, including affirmative disclosures posted in its FOIA Library. Information posted in each component's FOIA Library can be found at <a href="http://www.dol.gov/dol/foia/">http://www.dol.gov/dol/foia/</a>.

At the Department level, DOL was able to achieve a 19% reduction in the agency's backlog of pending FOIA requests. This is attributed to the continuing oversight of the departmental management of the FOIA program, the hard work of DOL's FOIA staff, consistent monitoring of FOIA related performance measures, and sustained effort toward backlog reduction throughout the Department's 23 FOIA components.

MSHA posted nearly 37,000 pages of documents related to the 2007 Crandall Canyon mine accidents online including the Fatal Accident Report and the Independent Review interview transcripts. Posting this information online substantially reduced the number of FOIA requests that MSHA anticipated regarding this high profile mine investigation. Statistics show that the agency received approximately 99,427 hits against its web page and that users downloaded over 1,690 files.

# 4.7. Online tracking of FOIA requests

Tracking of all incoming FOIA requests are managed through the Departmental FOIA tracking system, the Secretary's Information Management System for FOIA (SIMS-FOIA). Once a request has been assigned within the system and a FOIA Start Code has been implemented, the requester is able to track the status of requests via a web portal that is linked to the SIMS-FOIA. Requesters are able to access the following data through <a href="http://www.dol.gov/foia">http://www.dol.gov/foia</a>: Date of Receipt in the Department of Labor; Estimated Date of Completion; List of Specific agencies in which the request was assigned; Status (In-progress or decision made); and Date of Completion.

#### 4.8. Improving Timeliness and Reducing Backlogs

On average, DOL processed simple requests within 20.4 working days during FY 2013. During the same time, the department reduced the FOIA backlog by 16%. The number of Administrative appeals pending at the end of FY 2013 (183) actually increased from the prior year due to a substantial increase among the number of incoming FOIA appeals received, combined with a decrease in the number of staff available to address FOIA appeals. The department was able to close the ten oldest initial FOIA requests, the ten oldest administrative appeals, the ten oldest consultations that were pending as of the end of Fiscal Year 2012.

Utilizing Interim Responses:

OIS issued Best Practices guidance in September 2013 encouraging agency components

to make interim responses to extremely large and/or complex cases. Agency components report providing interim responses in instances where the requester has specifically asked for responsive records on a "rolling basis," or when the volume of responsive documents is extremely large. Offers of interim responses have also been used when the request requires a search among multiple offices or divisions, the recall of records from remote storage or when the requester has specifically agreed to accept interim responses when a component will not complete processing within the statutory time limit.

## 5. Additional Efforts to Improve Transparency

# 5.1. Existing Flagship Initiative: Online Enforcement Database

The initial version of the department's <u>Online Enforcement Database</u> was launched in April 2010, providing the public with access to enforcement data collected by Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP), Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), and Wage and Hour Division (WHD) in one location and searchable along a series of common dimensions for the very first time. In addition to the added value of access to aggregate enforcement data, this database also provides access to a variety of previously unpublished enforcement information.

Prior to this public database, only OSHA and MSHA made their enforcement data available online. For other DOL agencies, accessing this data required submitting requests directly to the agencies and waiting for a response, which can often be frustrating and discouraging. In some cases, accessing the data would have required submitting a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request. In addition, once an individual had all the data they'd requested, there was no easy way to cross-reference it. The DOL Searchable Enforcement Database provided a single, easy to search, point of entry to the Department's enforcement records. Since the initial launch, the site was updated quarterly, adding features and functionality.

In June 2011, the Department released a completely overhauled Version 2.0 with enhanced usability, data visualization capabilities, and enriched datasets. The look and feel of the site was completely revamped to provide visual access to the data utilizing open source mapping capabilities to display OSHA and MSHA Inspections and Violations data for last 30 days. In addition, users can drill down to view the individual inspection record or the company or mine history. The map view also provides census demographic data for the State (Source: Census 2010 (when available) and 2009 American Community Survey, providing a larger context for agency data. Additional features added in version 2.0 included:

- Dashboards showing aggregated metrics for each agency dataset;
- The MSHA Data Explorer, which gives users the opportunity to visualize, animate and compare mines history of inspections, violations, accidents, and more using a motion chart;

- Enhanced export capabilities including multi-tab Excel workbooks;
- Graphing capabilities and filters;
- Customizable search result views:
- Enriched MSHA & OSHA datasets using geolocation API for map display;
- Data catalog providing metadata and datasets for download in machine readable formats.

The Enforcement Database has spurred thinking about how we can use our data more effectively to convey the mission and value of the Department's work. The site also provided seed code to other agencies to leverage for their internal development and is promoting disciplined data curation, data visualization and metadata usage. The database has also been used heavily by press organizations and outside stakeholders to look at industry and corporate trends

Since the publication of the 2012 Open Government plan, the department has added additional features and functionality including:

- Data Explorer Labs showcasing OSHA and MSHA data
- An intuitive visual query builder that allows users to build their own queries and export or display results
- Additional datasets including OSHA injury and illness data
- Geocoded WHD data integrated into the map display
- Continue to enrich data with external data sources

#### 5.2. Next Steps: Online Enforcement Database

During 2015 the department will implement the Civic Services Schema across the Online Enforcement Database to ensure that its data and tools are readily available to all users via Yahoo!, Bing, Google and other participating search engines.

# 5.3. Existing Flagship Initiative: Open Grantmaking Initiative

The department launched the <u>Open Grantmaking Initiative</u>, in September 2011, providing a central online location for the public to learn about and learn from the DOL's competitive grant programs. Not only can users access an assortment of financial and programmatic information on funded grants, the website also links prospective applicants to tools and resources needed to craft a competitive grant application. Perhaps most importantly, the site allows the public to search, view and download abstracts of all grant applications for the Department's discretionary grant programs as well as the full technical proposals from grant applications selected for award.

The publication of such information was made possible by the inclusion of specific template language in all grant solicitations letting prospective grantees know about these requirements.

Making the grant abstracts and technical proposals available has allowed prospective grantees to learn from one another and removed any perception that "insider" knowledge of the grant process is required for successful applicants.

In addition, the department has also required that all education materials developed through the nearly \$2 billion Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT), the Workforce Innovation Fund, and a number of grants funded through the fees collected through the H-1B temporary foreign labor program must be made available for re-use through a Creative Commons licsense.

These requirements are in place to ensure that federal investments have as broad an impact as possible and to encourage innovation in the development of new learning materials. This license allows subsequent users to copy, distribute, transmit and adapt the copyrighted work and requires such users to attribute the Work in the manner specified by the grantee.

The requirements go even a step further, mandating that all computer software source code developed or created with these funds be released under an intellectual property license that allows others to use and build upon them. Specifically, the grantee will release all new source code developed or created with grant funds under an open license acceptable to either the Free Software Foundation and/or the Open Source Initiative.

Prior to the launch of the Open Grantmaking Initative, grant abstracts and technical proposals were among the most requested ETA items through the FOIA process. FOIA personnel worked to ensure that all proprietary information within the technical proposals was protected or properly waived. From FY 2013 to FY 2014, this initiative reduced incoming requests received by ETA from 114 to 77. Excluding improper FOIA requests, the decrease of actionable FOIA requests is actually 86 down to 45, a nearly 50% reduction.

# 5.4. Next Steps: Open Grantmaking Initiative

The department is exploring the feasibility of applying similar transparency requirements to all competitive grant programs. In addition, before the end of 2014 the department will launch a central repository for all of the Open Educational Resources developed through the TAACCCT grant program.

# 5.5. New Flagship Initiative: Upgrading developer.dol.gov and API:

Currently, developer.dol.gov and DOL's centralized API provides access to more than 200 public datasets from multiple DOL agencies. By overhauling the backend of the API, this initiative will provide authentication to enable authorized access to sensitive data and enable read/write capabilities to what is currently a read-only environment.

These enhancements will speed the release of public datasets, enable the creation of highly useful apps around personal and/or sensitive data, and enable the creation of apps

and services that send data to DOL agencies' systems from the public or other government-owned applications.

We will utilize open source software for the new API backend and in turn release our enhancements back to the open source community. The public and other federal agencies would then be able to reuse what we have built to save themselves time and money in their projects. We anticipate this work being completed in late 2015.

# 5.6. New Commitment: Adopting Civil Service Schema for dol.gov and online tools

The <u>Civic Services Schema</u> is a proposed standard for representing government services targeted to individuals and businesses. Schema.org is a set of schema standards that web masters use to provide machine readable information about data in a HTML document. However, schema.org is not limited to HTML, and other representation formats exist. One of these, JSON for Linking Data, is a lightweight representation of schema.org entities that is valid JSON with a minimal amount of schema specific data.

DOLETA.gov has successfully implemented the civic services schema across its entire platform – leading the way across federal entities and driving innovation within the federal space. This initiative will apply those lessons learned as we seek to apply the Civic Services Schema to all dol.gov pages as well as the highly popular online tools <a href="MaySkillsMyFuture.com">CareerOneStop.org</a>, <a href="MySkillsMyFuture.com">MySkillsMyFuture.com</a>, and <a href="MyNextMove.org">MyNextMove.org</a>. This work should be completed by early 2015.

# 6. Increasing Public Participation in the Mission of the Department

The department actively supports providing the public with clear notice about upcoming events, opportunities to comment on proposed regulations, and all other opportunities to engage and participate in the process of meeting our mission. Below are some of the ways that the department notifies the public of opportunities to engage along with examples of this engagement in action.

# 6.1. The Federal Register

As a matter of practice DOL agencies use the Federal Register to announce opportunities for the public to engage both in person and through written comments. The latest notices in the Federal Register are available at <a href="https://www.federalregister.gov/agencies/labor-department">https://www.federalregister.gov/agencies/labor-department</a>.

# 6.2. Online Events Calendar

Information about Department of Labor-sponsored public conferences, seminars, and workshops across the country is posted online in an events calendar available through the "About Us" tab on the website and through the following direct link: <a href="http://webapps.dol.gov/calendar/">http://webapps.dol.gov/calendar/</a>

#### 6.3. The DOL Newsletter

Sent to more than 470,000 subscribers each week, the DOL Newsletter includes a calendar of events for the upcoming week as well as highlights from the previous week's public events. The current issue of the newsletter is available online at <a href="http://www.dol.gov/sec/newsletter/">http://www.dol.gov/sec/newsletter/</a> and archived copies of every issue since 2009 are available at <a href="http://www.dol.gov/sec/newsletter/archive.htm">http://www.dol.gov/sec/newsletter/archive.htm</a>.

#### 6.4. Public Engagement Improves Job Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities

For four decades, the <u>Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act</u> and <u>Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act</u> have prohibited employment discrimination on the basis of veteran status or disability. These laws have required federal contractors and subcontractors to affirmatively recruit, hire, train and promote qualified individuals. Unfortunately, the laws haven't always worked as intended. People with disabilities, who have an enormous contribution to make to our economy, and veterans, who have risked life and limb on our behalf, are still disproportionately represented among the unemployed and those out of the workforce entirely.

To help address this need, the department's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs published a notice of proposed rulemaking in the Federal Register and sought input from advocates, policymakers, employer groups, workers and job seekers. We listened to their stories about the challenges facing veterans and people with disabilities in the workforce, and we saw the limitations of the legal requirements designed to assist these populations. We also listened to contractors, and we made appropriate changes to address their concerns about how best to implement these necessary improvements. Over the course of this engagement, we chose to extend the duration of public comment before publishing a final rule in August of 2013. Following the publication of the final rule, a press release was issued in nine different languages to ensure that information was accessible to impacted individuals. In September, the department held a Twitter Chat to highlight the changes and answer additional questions. As a result of this engagement Governor Tom Ridge held up the department's regulatory process in a Wall Street Journal op-ed saying "the Labor Department's rule-making process should be a model for how government can work with stakeholders in crafting regulations that are practical and effective.

#### 6.5. OSHA Public Hearings on Silica Exposure

The department's Occupational Safety and Health Administration has an extremely open and transparent rulemaking process that involves extensive public input through written comments, multiple weeks of formal hearings, and a 2.5 hour web chat in January 2014. Additional information about the public participation in the Silica rulemaking is available online at <a href="https://www.osha.gov/silica/">https://www.osha.gov/silica/</a>.

# 6.6. MSHA Stakeholder Seminars on Ending Black Lung

The department's Mine Safety and Health Administration is holding a series of field seminars in coal mining regions to provide a comprehensive review of the new requirements of 30 Code of Federal Regulations Parts 70, 71, 72, 75 and 90 aimed at ending black lung. In May and June 2014, MSHA is conducting these sessions in Beaver, WV; Hazard, KY; Washington, PA; Evansville, IN; Sumiton, AL; and Grand Junction, CO. A copy of the final rule and outreach/compliance assistance materials are available on MSHA's website at <a href="http://www.msha.gov/endblacklung/">http://www.msha.gov/endblacklung/</a>.

# 6.7. Engaging the Public with Online Collaboration and Crowdsourcing Tools

To effectively meet their mission, the Office of Disability Employment Policy needs ongoing, meaningful input from a variety of partners representing key constituency groups. In response to this need, ODEP leveraged their ePolicyWorks initiative to host a series of online dialogues. The crowd-sourcing platform and collaborative work spaces enable ODEP and its partners to enlist the public's input on key policy issues related to the employment of people with disabilities by channeling the brainpower of our federal partners, nonprofits, NGOs and other stakeholders. ODEP is currently hosting an online dialogue focused on advancing accessibility and inclusion in social media from inside the technology industry.

This dialogue follows a similar session held between March and April 2014 focused on the social media user experience. This dialogue asked social media users for ideas on how social media can be made more accessible for everyone. The input from the dialogue helped the National Council on Disability and ODEP understand the role of social media in the lives of people with disabilities and identify creative ways people with disabilities deal with a variety of accessibility issues. The information gathered from this dialogue was also used to inform the second dialogue that asked the tech industry for their input on the use of universal design in the design and development of social media tools.

Previously ODEP examined the impact of existing federal regulations on the transition from school to work for youth with disabilities. The event was designed to address the reality that, compared to their peers without disabilities, youth with disabilities are twice as likely to drop out of school and half as likely to enroll in and complete post-secondary education. During the two-week online event, more than 3,000 participants contributed 355 unique ideas and provided more than 1,600 comments and close to 10,000 votes. The thoughtful responses will add tremendous value and help the host agencies strategically work together to develop a plan to improve transition results for youth. The thoughtful responses added tremendous value and will help frame efforts to develop a plan to improve transition results for youth with disabilities by 2020.

In 2013, ODEP asked employers, human resource professionals, and diversity experts to engage in a dialogue about the <u>resources needed to facilitate the hiring, retention and advancement of people with disabilities</u>. During the three-day event, more than 1,076 participants contributed 60 unique ideas and provided more than 311 comments and close to 2,200 votes. The thoughtful contributions and responses will add tremendous

value in helping develop programs, services and policies that serve to advance employment outcomes for people with disabilities.

ODEP will continue to use this online platform and community to engage a vast array of stakeholder groups in meeting their mission.

# 7. Improving Collaboration to Advance the Mission of the Department of Labor

# 7.1. Building Communities of Practice to Support the Federal Workforce System

The department's Employment and Training Administration currently sponsors an online platform called <a href="Workforce3One">Workforce3One</a>, which is designed to build the capacity of the Workforce Investment System. The site allows the professionals from across local, state and federal government that make up the federally-funded workforce system to engage with each other as well as employers, community- and faith-based organizations, and educators. Workforce3One supplements other technical assistance provided by the Employment and Training Administration's national and regional staff to build the capacity of the workforce investment system to successfully meet the employment needs of America's workforce and employers. The site:

- allows users to share innovative approaches, products, and tools through targeted communities of practice;
- offers webinars that highlight promising practices and a space to share ideas;
- provides a vehicle for ETA to share information and products developed at the national level;
- serves as a key point of dissemination for the approaches, products, and tools for organizations receiving funding through the department's competitive grant programs; and
- offers a database more than 4,000 resources with material added weekly to help strengthen the workforce system and deliver crucial services to America's job seekers.

The Employment and Training Administration is currently working with its partners to upgrade this collaborative workspace and a new platform will be rolled out by June 2015.

# 7.2. New Commitment: Building an Internal API for cross-agency data sharing

One of the lessons learned from our centralized public API is that our approach makes it easier for developers to build solutions using data from a variety of agencies and programs in DOL. This is accomplished by having a single standard approach and tool set available to developers. DOL also benefits from having one application to maintain instead of dozens, or in our case, hundreds. The same principle holds true for data sharing between internal systems.

By breaking down the traditional barriers to cross-agency and cross-system development, significant time and money savings can be realized while enabling the creation of solutions that would have otherwise been shelved due to either technical or

bureaucratic complexities. The project is currently in a pilot phase.

# 8. Chart of Proposed Deliverables

| Commitment   | Туре                   | Notes   | Target Completion Date |
|--|------------------------|---|------------------------|
| Implement the Civic<br>Services Schema across<br>the Online Enforcement<br>Database                | New<br>Commitment      | Will raise visibility of DOL's enforcement data through Yahoo!, Bing, Google and other participating search engines.  | December 31,<br>2015   |
| Explore applying current transparency requirements to all competitive grant programs               | Expanded<br>Commitment | Will leverage the lessons learned from the TAACCCT, Workforce Innovation Fund and H-1B grant competitions and continue to provide unprecedented transparency into DOL grants. | Ongoing                |
| Launch central<br>repository for Open<br>Educational Resources<br>developed through DOL<br>funding | New<br>Commitment      | Will leverage the power of the existing transparency requirements to ensure materails created with federal funds can be reused for free.                                      | December 31,<br>2014   |
| Upgrade API and<br>Developer.dol.gov   | Expanded<br>Commitment | Will enable secure read/write access to support additional public use of DOL data.  | Q4 2015                |
| Adopting Civil Service<br>Schema for dol.gov and<br>online tools                                   | New<br>Commitment      | Will raise visibility of DOL information and online tools through Yahoo!, Bing, Google and other participating search engines.  | Q1 2015                |
| Launch new online<br>collaboration platform<br>for the workforce<br>system                         | New<br>Commitment      | Will facilitate enhanced communities of practice and collaboration between public private partnerships and government at all levels.  | Q2 2015                |

# 9. Referenced Online Resources

- Bureau of Labor Statistics API Data: <a href="http://developer.dol.gov/BLS\_Numbers-DATASET.htm">http://developer.dol.gov/BLS\_Numbers-DATASET.htm</a>
- Career One Stop: <a href="http://www.careeronestop.org">http://www.careeronestop.org</a>
- Civic Services Schema: http://www.w3.org/wiki/WebSchemas/CivicServices
- Data.gov: <a href="http://www.data.gov">http://www.data.gov</a>
- Disability Employment App Challenge: <a href="http://disability.challengepost.com/">http://disability.challengepost.com/</a>
- DOL #AccessJobs Twitter Chat Recap: <a href="http://social.dol.gov/blog/a-recap-of-the-accessjobs-twitter-chat/">http://social.dol.gov/blog/a-recap-of-the-accessjobs-twitter-chat/</a>

- DOL 2014 Chief FOIA Officer Report: http://www.dol.gov/sol/foia/2014ChiefFOIAOfficerRpt.htm
- DOL Developer Community: <a href="http://developer.dol.gov/">http://developer.dol.gov/</a>
- DOL Fair Labor Data Challenge: <a href="http://fairlabor.challengepost.com/">http://fairlabor.challengepost.com/</a>
- DOL FOIA Program: <a href="http://www.dol.gov/dol/foia/">http://www.dol.gov/dol/foia/</a>
- DOL FOIA Reading Room: <a href="http://www.dol.gov/dol/foia/readroom.htm">http://www.dol.gov/dol/foia/readroom.htm</a>
- DOL Funding Opportunities on Grants.gov: <a href="http://www.grants.gov/search-grants.html?agencies%3DDOL%7CDepartment%20of%20Labor">http://www.grants.gov/search-grants.html?agencies%3DDOL%7CDepartment%20of%20Labor</a>
- DOL FY2013 Annual FOIA Report: <a href="http://www.dol.gov/sol/foia/2014anrpt.htm">http://www.dol.gov/sol/foia/2014anrpt.htm</a>
- DOL Information on Black Lung: http://www.msha.gov/endblacklung/
- DOL Information on Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act: http://www.dol.gov/compliance/laws/comp-rehab.htm
- DOL Information on Silica: <a href="https://www.osha.gov/silica/">https://www.osha.gov/silica/</a>
- DOL Information on VEVRAA: <a href="http://www.dol.gov/ofccp/regs/compliance/fsvevraa.htm">http://www.dol.gov/ofccp/regs/compliance/fsvevraa.htm</a>
- DOL Newsletter Archive: <a href="http://www.dol.gov/\_sec/newsletter/archive.htm">http://www.dol.gov/\_sec/newsletter/archive.htm</a>
- DOL Newsletter: http://www.dol.gov/\_sec/newsletter/
- DOL Online Enforcement Database: <a href="http://www.dol.gov/enforcementdata">http://www.dol.gov/enforcementdata</a>
- DOL Online Events Calendar: http://webapps.dol.gov/calendar/
- DOL Online FOIA Tracking System: <a href="http://www.dol.gov/foia/">http://www.dol.gov/foia/</a>
- DOL Open Grantmaking Initiative: http://www.dol.gov/dol/grants/
- DOL Quarterly FOIA Data available in XML files: http://www.dol.gov/dol/foia/FOIASubmit.htm
- DOL Recent Congressional Testimony: <a href="http://www.dol.gov/\_sec/media/congress/">http://www.dol.gov/\_sec/media/congress/</a>
- DOL Records Management Program: http://www.dol.gov/dol/records/
- DOL Whistleblower Protection Ombudsman: <a href="http://www.oig.dol.gov/whistleblower-ombudsman.htm">http://www.oig.dol.gov/whistleblower-ombudsman.htm</a>
- ePolicyWorks Initiative: https://www.epolicyworks.org/
- ePolicyWorks Online Dialogue on advancing accessibility and inclusion in social media <a href="http://socialmediatech.epolicyworks.org/">http://socialmediatech.epolicyworks.org/</a>
- ePolicyWorks Online Dialogue on resources needed to facilitate the hiring, retention and advancement of people with disabilities: <a href="http://employerdialogue-epolicyworks.ideascale.com/">http://employerdialogue-epolicyworks.ideascale.com/</a>
- ePolicyWorks Online Dialogue on transitioning from school to work: <a href="http://fptepolicyworks.ideascale.com/">http://fptepolicyworks.ideascale.com/</a>
- Equal Pay App Challenge: <a href="http://equalpay.challengepost.com/">http://equalpay.challengepost.com/</a>
- Federal Register Notices from DOL: <a href="https://www.federalregister.gov/agencies/labor-department">https://www.federalregister.gov/agencies/labor-department</a>
- GSA DigitalGov Search Tool: <a href="http://search.digitalgov.gov/">http://search.digitalgov.gov/</a>
- How to submit a DOL FOIA request: http://www.dol.gov/dol/foia/FOIASubmit.htm
- iCERT Labor Certification Registry: https://icert.doleta.gov/
- IT Dashboard: https://www.itdashboard.gov/
- MSHA Crandall Canyon Single Source Page: http://www.msha.gov/FATALS/2007/CrandallCanyon/CrandallCanyonreport.asp
- MSHA POV Online Tool: <a href="http://www.msha.gov/POV/POVsinglesource.asp#tool">http://www.msha.gov/POV/POVsinglesource.asp#tool</a>

- MyNextMove.org: <a href="http://www.mynextmove.org">http://www.mynextmove.org</a>
- MySkillsMyFuture: <a href="http://www.myskillsmyfuture.com">http://www.myskillsmyfuture.com</a>
- Office of Unemployment Insurance API Data: <a href="http://developer.dol.gov/OUI\_Claims-DATASET.htm">http://developer.dol.gov/OUI\_Claims-DATASET.htm</a>
- Open Data Inventory Approach: <a href="http://www.dol.gov/digital-strategy/inventoryschedule.htm">http://www.dol.gov/digital-strategy/inventoryschedule.htm</a>
- Open Government National Action Plan: http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/us\_national\_action\_plan\_6p.pdf
- Open Government Page: <u>www.dol.gov/open</u>
- Regulations.gov: http://www.regulations.gov
- USASpending.gov: <a href="http://www.usaspending.gov">http://www.usaspending.gov</a>
- Wall Street Journal Op-Ed from Governor Ridge: http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702303464504579109131487680594
- Worker Safety and Health App Challenge: <a href="http://workersafetyhealth.challengepost.com/">http://workersafetyhealth.challengepost.com/</a>